IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
BEFORE THE BOARD OF PATENT APPEALS AND INTERFERENCES

Appellants:	Matsa et al.	:	Group Art Unit: 2157
Serial No.:	09/866,410	:	Examiner: Lashonda T. Jacobs
Filed:	05/25/2001	:	Appeal No.:
Title:	ROUTING INSTANT MESSAGES USING CONFIGURABLE, PLUGGABLE DELIVERY MANAGERS		

CERTIFICATE OF ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being transmitted electronically to: Examiner Lashonda T. Jacobs, Group Art Unit 2157, United States Patent and Trademark Office, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on May 29, 2007.

Jill K. Becker

Date of Signature: May 29, 2007.

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Brief of Appellants

Dear Sir:

This is an appeal from a final rejection, dated March 10, 2006, rejecting claims 1-11, 16-26, 31, 33-43 and 48-51, all the claims being considered in the above-identified application, and a Notice of Panel Decision from Pre-Appeal Brief Review, dated February 26, 2007. An Appeal Brief was initially due on or before March 26, 2007, and thus, a Request For Extension Of Time and the requisite fee are enclosed herewith. Therefore, this Appeal Brief is being timely filed. This Brief is accompanied by a transmittal letter authorizing the charging of appellants' deposit account for payment of the requisite fee set forth in 37 C.F.R. §41.20(b)(2).

Real Party In Interest

This application is assigned to International Business Machines Corporation by virtue of an assignment executed by the co-inventors on May 21, 2001, and recorded with the United States Patent and Trademark Office at reel 011893, frame 0439, on May 25, 2001. Therefore, the real party in interest is International Business Machines Corporation.

Related Appeals And Interferences

To the knowledge of the appellants, appellants' undersigned legal representative, and the assignee, there are no other appeals or interferences which will directly affect or be directly affected by or have a bearing on the Board's decision in the instant appeal.

Status Of Claims

This patent application was filed on May 25, 2001 with the United States Patent and Trademark Office. As filed, the application included forty-seven (47) claims, of which eight (8) were independent claims (i.e., claims 1, 12, 16, 27, 31, 32, 33 and 44).

On October 4, 2004, a first Office Action was mailed that included a restriction to one of the following inventions: claims 1-11, 16-26, 31 and 33-43; and claim 12-15, 27-30, 32, and 44-47. Further, it included a rejection of claims 1-11, 16-26, 31 and 33-43 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Shavit et al. (U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0160757). In response to this Office Action, appellants filed a Response to Office Action on January 20, 2005, in which claims 12-15, 27-30, 32 and 44-47 were canceled; claims 48-51 were added and claim 23 was amended.

In response thereto, a second Office Action was mailed on April 29, 2005 that included a rejection of claims 1-11, 16-26, 31, 33-43 and 48-51 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shavit et al. (U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0160757) in view of Somashekar et al. (U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0116477).

On July 29, 2005, appellants filed a Response to Office Action addressing the rejections in the second Office Action. No claims were canceled, added or amended. Claims 1-11, 16-26,

31, 33-43 and 48-51 remained pending. Moreover, on October 7, 2005, appellants filed a Declaration Under 37 C.F.R. §1.131.

In response thereto, a third Office Action was mailed on October 19, 2005 indicating that the Declaration previously filed was sufficient to overcome Shavit but not Somashekar. Additionally, claims 1-11, 16-26, 31, 33-43 and 48-51 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Thro et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,147,977) in view of Somashekar et al. (U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0116477).

On January 19, 2006, appellants filed a Response to Office Action addressing the rejections in the third Office Action. No claims were canceled, added or amended. Claims 1-11, 16-26, 31, 33-43 and 48-51 remained pending.

On March 10, 2006, a final Office Action was mailed that included a rejection of claims 1-11, 16-26, 31, 33-43 and 48-51 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Thro et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,147,977) in view of Somashekar et al. (U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0116477).

A Response to Final Office Action was filed by the appellants on May 10, 2006, addressing the rejections in the Final Office Action. No claims were canceled, added or amended. Claims 1-11, 16-26, 31, 33-43 and 48-51 remained pending. In reply to the Response After Final, appellants received an Advisory Action, dated June 7, 2006, which indicated that the request for reconsideration did not place the application in condition for allowance.

In response, appellants electronically filed a Notice of Appeal, with a Petition for a One-Month Extension of Time and Pre-Appeal Brief Request for Review on July 10, 2006. Subsequently, appellants received a Notice of Panel Decision from Pre-Appeal Brief Review, dated February 26, 2007 indicating that the application still remains under Appeal because there is at least one actual issue for appeal.

Therefore, the status of the claims is as follows:

Claims allowed – None;

Claims objected to – None;

Claims rejected – 1-11, 16-26, 31, 33-43 and 48-51; and

Claims canceled – 12-15, 27-30, 32 and 44-47.

Appellants are appealing the rejection of claims 1-11, 16-26, 31, 33-43 and 48-51.

Status Of Amendments

Appellants' remarks proffered in the Response to the Final Office Action were considered. However, no claim amendment was effectuated by the Response. The claims as set out in Appendix A include all prior entered amendments.

Summary Of Claimed Subject Matter

In one aspect of the invention, appellants claim a method (e.g., independent claim 1), a system (e.g., independent claim 31) and program storage device (e.g., independent claim 33) of routing instant messages (see, e.g., page 5, paragraph 20 of appellants' specification). The method includes, for instance, defining, at runtime by a pluggable delivery manager (see e.g., page 8, paragraph 27 of appellants' specification), a delivery policy to be used to route an instant message to an intended recipient of the instant message (see, e.g., page 8, paragraph 32 of appellants' specification), wherein the delivery policy is based upon a configuration of the pluggable delivery manager, a user configuration of the intended recipient, and one or more delivery mechanisms (see, e.g., page 6, paragraph 20; page 9, paragraph 32; page 11, paragraph 36; page 11, paragraph 39, page 12, paragraph 41; FIGs. 2, 6 and 7 of appellants' specification); and routing said instant message to the intended recipient using said delivery policy (see, e.g., page 12, paragraph 40; page 12, paragraph 41; FIGs. 2-8 of appellants' specification).

In a further aspect of the present invention, appellants claim a system (e.g., independent claim 16) of routing instant messages (see, e.g., page 5, paragraph 20 of appellants'

specification). The system includes, for instance, means for defining, at runtime by a pluggable delivery manager (see, e.g., page 8, paragraph 27 of appellants' specification), a delivery policy to be used to route an instant message to an intended recipient of the instant message (see, e.g., page 8, paragraph 32 of appellants' specification), wherein the delivery policy is based upon a configuration of the pluggable delivery manager, a user configuration of the intended recipient, and one or more available delivery mechanisms (see, e.g., page 6, paragraph 20; page 9, paragraph 32; page 11, paragraph 36; page 11, paragraph 39; page 12, paragraph 41; FIGs. 2, 6 and 7 of appellants' specification); and means for routing said instant message to the intended recipient using said delivery policy (see, e.g., page 12, paragraph 40; page 12, paragraph 41; FIGs. 2 and 8 of appellants' specification). As described in appellants' specification, in one example, components of the processing environment of FIG. 1 (e.g., computing unit 102 and/or computing unit 104) perform the defining at runtime and routing functions of the claimed means for elements.

In a further aspect of the present invention, as recited in dependent claims 8 and 40, the pluggable delivery manager is configured by selecting a configuration for the pluggable delivery manager from a set of one or more configurations, in which the selecting uses content of the instant message to make the selection (see, e.g., page 9, paragraph 30; FIG. 2 of appellants' specification).

In another aspect of the present invention, as recited in dependent claim 23, appellants recite means for configuring the pluggable delivery manager. The means for configuring comprises means for selecting a configuration for the pluggable delivery manager from a set of one or more configurations, in which the selecting uses content of the instant message to make the selection (see, e.g., page 9, paragraph 30; FIG. 2 of appellants' specification). As described in appellants' specification, in one example, components of the processing environment of FIG. 1 (e.g., computing unit 102 and/or computing unit 104) perform the configuring and selecting functions of the claimed means for elements.

In yet a further aspect of the present invention, as recited in dependent claims 9 and 41, the pluggable delivery manager is configured at runtime (see, e.g., page 5, paragraph 20; page 9, paragraph 29 of appellants' specification).

In another aspect of the present invention, as recited in dependent claim 24, the system includes means for configuring the pluggable delivery manager at runtime (see, e.g., page 5, paragraph 20; page 9, paragraph 29 of appellants' specification). As described in appellants' specification, in one example, components of the processing environment of FIG. 1 (e.g., computing unit 102 and/or computing unit 104) perform the configuring at runtime of the claimed means for elements.

In yet further aspects of the present invention, it is explicitly stated that the pluggable delivery manager is dynamically added at runtime (e.g., dependent claims 48-51). Support for these claims may be found in appellants' specification including, for instance, page 7, paragraph 23.

Grounds Of Rejection To Be Reviewed On Appeal

1. Claims 1-11, 16-26, 31, 33-43 and 48-51 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Thro et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,147,977) in view of Somashekar et al. (U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0116477).

Argument

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Thro et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,147,977) in view of Somashekar et al. (U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0116477)

Claims 1-11, 16-26, 31, 33-43 and 48-51:

Claims 1-11, 16-26, 31, 33-43 and 48-51 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Thro et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,147,977) in view of Somashekar et al. (U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0116477). Appellants respectfully submit that the rejection of these claims is erroneous and respectfully request reversal of this rejection for at least the reasons below.

1. Independent Claims 1, 16, 31, 33:

Appellant's invention is directed, in one aspect, to instant messaging, and in particular, to providing a messaging environment in which configurable, pluggable delivery managers are used

to route instant messages to intended recipients. A pluggable delivery manager defines at runtime a delivery policy to be used to route an instant message.

As one particular example, appellants claim a method of routing instant messages (e.g., independent claim 1). The method includes, for instance, defining, at runtime by a pluggable delivery manager, a delivery policy to be used to route an instant message to an intended recipient of the instant message, wherein the delivery policy is based upon a configuration of the pluggable delivery manager, a user configuration of the intended recipient, and one or more available delivery mechanisms; and routing the instant message to the intended recipient using the delivery policy. Thus, in this aspect of appellants' claimed invention, a pluggable delivery manager is configured and used to define, at runtime, a delivery policy used to route an instant message. This is very different from the teachings of Thro or Somashekar, either alone or in combination.

While Thro describes message processing, Thro does not describe, teach or suggest a pluggable delivery manager or using a pluggable delivery manager in routing instant messages, as claimed by appellants. This is explicitly admitted on page 3 of the Final Office Action. Thus, Somashekar is relied upon. However, appellants respectfully submit that Somashekar does not overcome the deficiencies of Thro. Somashekar also fails to describe, teach or suggest using a pluggable delivery manager in routing instant messages. Since neither reference describes, teaches or suggests using a pluggable delivery manager to route instant messages, the combination of Thro and Somashekar also fails to teach or suggest at least this aspect of appellants' claimed invention.

Appellants claim, for instance, defining, at runtime by a pluggable delivery manager, a delivery policy to be used to route an instant message to an intended recipient of the instant message. This claimed feature is not described, taught or suggested by either Thro, Somashekar or any combination thereof.

As described above, Thro does not describe, teach or suggest a pluggable delivery manager, and therefore, also fails to describe, teach or suggest appellants' claimed element of defining, at runtime by a pluggable delivery manager, a delivery policy to be used to route an instant message to an intended recipient of the instant message.

Further, although Somashekar describes pluggable components, there is no description, teaching or suggestion in Somashekar of appellants' claimed element of defining, at runtime by a pluggable delivery manager, a delivery policy to be used to route an instant message to an intended recipient of the instant message. While Somashekar describes a technique for configuring pluggable components, Somashekar does not describe, teach or suggest using pluggable components in the delivery of instant messages. The teaching of pluggable components is not a teaching of using pluggable components to route instant messages, as claimed by appellants. Since Thro and Somashekar both fail to describe, teach or suggest at least this claimed element of defining, at runtime by a pluggable delivery manager, a delivery policy to be used to route an instant message, appellants respectfully submit that the combination of Thro and Somashekar also fails to describe, teach or suggest this claimed element.

Additionally, appellants respectfully submit that Somashekar is concerned with tasks that occur prior to runtime, in contrast to appellants' claimed invention. In Somashekar, network deliverable components are configured for deployment in embedded servers (see, e.g., col. 2, paragraph 15). Somashekar is concerned with events that take place prior to deployment, not at runtime. It is well-known, that what occurs "before deployment" is not equivalent to "runtime", as suggested on page 10 of the Final Office Action. Runtime is when a program is actually running (see, e.g., http://www.webopedia.com/TERM/r/runtime.html and http://whatis.techtarget .com/ definition/0,289893,sid9_gci212933,00.html, enclosed for the Examiner's convenience). Since Somashekar is concerned with activities that occur prior to deployment, as indicated in the Final Office Action, Somashekar is not concerned with runtime, as claimed by appellants.

Appellants respectfully submit that at most the combination of Thro and Somashekar (*assuming arguendo* the combination is proper) teaches that messages can be routed based on priorities; and that pluggable components can be configured. There is no teaching or suggestion in the combination that pluggable components can be used in routing instant messages, as claimed by appellants. To indicate that this is taught or suggested by the combination is hindsight reconstruction of appellants' claimed invention. For at least these reasons, appellants respectfully request an indication of allowability for independent claim 1 and all other pending claims.

Moreover, appellants respectfully submit that the combination of Thro and Somashekar is improper. For example, there is no teaching or suggestion in the references themselves to make the combination or modification suggested in the Office Action. It is well known that:

> It is insufficient to establish obviousness that the separate elements of the invention existed in the prior art; absent some teaching or suggestion, in the prior art, to combine the elements. Arkie Loures Inc. v. Gene Lareau Tackle Inc., 43 USPQ 2d 1294, 1297 (Fed. Circ. 1997)

Appellants respectfully submit that there is no such teaching or suggestion in the references. Thro makes no mention of using pluggable components. Further, Somashekar makes no mention of using pluggable components in routing instant messages. Thus, neither reference teaches or suggests the modification.

Justification for the combination is stated in the Office Action, as follows:

> Given the teachings of Somashekar, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify Thro by including a pluggable component (delivery manager) within system in order to configure the pluggable component (delivery manager) before deployment thereby allowing the pluggable component (delivery manager) to perform the specified instructions.

Again, appellants respectfully submit that the above justification does not indicate where the references expressly teach the combination. There is no teaching in the justification or in Somashekar of using a pluggable component to route instant messages. Further, Thro makes no mention whatsoever of using a pluggable component in its environment.

Based on the foregoing, appellants respectfully submit that the combination of Thro and Somashekar is improper, and even if proper, the combination does not teach or suggest at least appellants' claimed element of defining, at runtime by a pluggable delivery manager, a delivery policy to be used to route an instant message to an intended recipient of the instant message. Thus, appellants respectfully submit that the independent claims are patentable over the combination of Thro and Somashekar.

Dependent Claims

The dependent claims are patentable for the same reasons as the independent claims, as well as for their own additional features. The separate patentability of various of the dependent claims is discussed below. Appellants respectfully request an indication of allowability for all dependent claims.

A. Dependent Claims 8, 23 and 40

Appellants respectfully submit that dependent claims 8, 23 and 40 are patentable for similar reasons as the independent claims from which they depend, as well as for their own additional features. Appellants respectfully submit that the rejection of these claims is erroneous and respectfully request an indication of allowability for these claims.

As one example, dependent claim 8 recites further comprising configuring the pluggable delivery manager, wherein the configuring includes selecting a configuration for the pluggable delivery manager from a set of one or more configurations, wherein the selecting uses content of the instant message to make the selection.

There is no description, teaching or suggestion in Thro or Somashekar of, for instance, configuring the pluggable delivery manager by selecting the configuration from a set of one or more configurations, wherein the selecting uses content of the instant message to make the selection.

It is explicitly admitted in the Office Action that Thro does not explicitly disclose a pluggable delivery manager, and therefore, Somashekar is relied upon. However, there is no description, teaching or suggestion in either of references of configuring a pluggable delivery manager by selecting a configuration for the pluggable delivery manager from a set of one or more configurations using content of the instant message. Again, Thro does not describe pluggable delivery managers, and therefore, cannot describe selecting a configuration for the pluggable delivery manager. Further, Somashekar describes a pluggable component, but does not describe, teach, or suggest configuring that pluggable component using content of an instant message.

It is stated in the Office Action:

> Given the teachings of Somashekar, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify Thro by including a pluggable component (delivery manager) within system in order to configure the pluggable component (delivery manager) before deployment thereby allowing the pluggable component (delivery manager) to perform the specified functions.

Appellants respectfully submit that the above reasoning fails to describe how the content of an instant message would be used to configure a pluggable component. Instead, this description describes configuring before deployment, which is prior to having an instant message.

Appellants respectfully submit that since the pluggable component is being configured before deployment, there is no teaching or suggestion of configuring the pluggable component based on content of an instant message. Even in the Office Action there is no support of any teaching or suggestion of how Thro would be modified by Somashekar to teach appellants' claimed invention. There is no teaching in Somashekar or in the Office Action of modifying Thro to select a configuration for a pluggable delivery manager from a set of one or more configurations, wherein the selecting uses content of the instant message to make the selection. Instead, Somashekar merely teaches that a pluggable component can be configured before deployment. If Somashekar teaches that the pluggable delivery component needs to be configured prior to deployment, how would one reconcile with using content of an instant message (which is after deployment) to configure the pluggable component. Somashekar teaches away from appellants' claimed invention.

Based on the foregoing, appellants respectfully request an indication of allowability for dependent claims 8, 23 and 40.

B. Dependent Claims 9, 24 and 41

Appellants respectfully submit that dependent claims 9, 24 and 41 are patentable for similar reasons as the independent claims from which they depend, as well as for their own additional features. Appellants respectfully submit that the rejection of these claims is erroneous and respectfully request an indication of allowability for these claims.

As an example, dependent claim 9 recites that the configuring of the pluggable delivery manager is performed at runtime. This is not described, taught or suggested in Thro or Somashekar, either alone or in combination.

Again, it is explicitly admitted in the Office Action that Thro does not disclose a pluggable delivery manager, and that Thro further does not teach configuring the pluggable delivery manager at runtime. Therefore, Somashekar is relied upon. However, Somashekar also does not describe configuring a pluggable component at runtime.

It is stated in the Office Action:

> Given the teachings of Somashekar, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify Thro by including a pluggable component (delivery manager) within system in order to configure the pluggable component (delivery manager) before deployment thereby allowing the pluggable component (delivery manager) to perform the specified functions.

As even admitted in the Office Action, Somashekar does not configure at runtime, but instead before deployment. It is known to one skilled in the art that before deployment is very different from runtime. Since Somashekar is concerned with activities that occur prior to deployment, as indicated in the Final Office Action and in Somashekar itself (e.g., paragraphs 15 and 16 of Somashekar as well as FIGs. 8, 9 and 10), Somashekar cannot overcome the deficiencies of Thro. Somashekar nor Thro teaches or suggests configuring a pluggable delivery manager at runtime.

Based on the foregoing, applicants respectfully submit that the combination of Thro and Somashekar fails to describe, teach or suggest at least this aspect of appellants' claimed invention.

C. Dependent Claims 48-51

Appellants respectfully submit that dependent claims 48-51 are patentable for similar reasons as the independent claims from which they depend, as well as for their own additional features. Appellants respectfully submit that the rejection of these claims is erroneous and respectfully request an indication of allowability for these claims.

These claims recite that the pluggable delivery manager is dynamically added at runtime. For all the reasons stated above, appellants respectfully submit that there is no teaching in Thro of dynamically adding a pluggable delivery manager at runtime. This is explicitly admitted in the Office Action. Further, Somashekar does not overcome the deficiencies of Thro. Again, Somashekar teaches performing actions at deployment and not at runtime. Since both Thro and Somashekar fail to describe, teach or suggest dynamically adding a pluggable delivery manager at runtime, appellants respectfully submit that these claims are patentable over the combination of Thro and Somashekar.

Conclusion

Appellants respectfully request reversal of the §103 rejection set forth in the final Office Action. Appellants respectfully submit that their claimed invention would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art based upon Thro and Somashekar, either alone or in combination.

For all of the above reasons, appellants allege error in rejecting their claims as unpatentable by the applied art. Accordingly, reversal of all rejections is respectfully requested.

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Claims Appendix

1. A method of routing instant messages, said method comprising:

defining, at runtime by a pluggable delivery manager, a delivery policy to be used to route an instant message to an intended recipient of the instant message, wherein the delivery policy is based upon a configuration of the pluggable delivery manager, a user configuration of the intended recipient, and one or more available delivery mechanisms; and

routing said instant message to the intended recipient using said delivery policy.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein said defining of the delivery policy comprises:

defining a routing policy based on said user configuration and said one or more available delivery mechanisms, wherein said routing policy includes one or more possible delivery mechanisms; and

selecting from the routing policy at least one delivery mechanism to be included in the delivery policy, said selecting being based upon the configuration of the pluggable delivery manager.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein said defining of the delivery policy comprises:

determining, from the user configuration, one or more delivery mechanisms supported by said intended recipient;

determining which of said one or more delivery mechanisms supported by said intended recipient are included in the one or more available delivery mechanisms to yield one or more possible delivery mechanisms; and

determining which of the one or more possible delivery mechanisms are supported by the pluggable delivery manager, as indicated in the configuration of the pluggable delivery manager, a result of which defines the delivery policy.

4. The method of claim 3, wherein said routing comprises dispatching the instant message to at least one delivery mechanism of the delivery policy, as indicated by the delivery policy.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein said routing comprises dispatching the instant message to at least one delivery mechanism of the delivery policy, as indicated by the delivery policy.

6. The method of claim 1, further comprising selecting the pluggable delivery manager from a plurality of delivery managers.

7. The method of claim 1, further comprising configuring said pluggable delivery manager.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein said configuring comprises selecting a configuration for said pluggable delivery manager from a set of one or more configurations, wherein said selecting uses content of the instant message to make the selection.

9. The method of claim 7, wherein said configuring comprises configuring said pluggable delivery manager at runtime.

10. The method of claim 1, wherein the intended recipient is indicated by the instant message.

11. The method of claim 1, wherein at least one available delivery mechanism of said one or more available delivery mechanisms is pluggable.

12. Canceled

13. Canceled

14. Canceled

15. Canceled

16. A system of routing instant messages, said system comprising:

means for defining, at runtime by a pluggable delivery manager, a delivery policy to be used to route an instant message to an intended recipient of the instant message, wherein the delivery policy is based upon a configuration of the pluggable delivery manager, a user configuration of the intended recipient, and one or more available delivery mechanisms; and

means for routing said instant message to the intended recipient using said delivery policy.

17. The system of claim 16, wherein said means for defining the delivery policy comprises:

means for defining a routing policy based on said user configuration and said one or more available delivery mechanisms, wherein said routing policy includes one or more possible delivery mechanisms; and

means for selecting from the routing policy at least one delivery mechanism to be included in the delivery policy, the selecting being based upon the configuration of the pluggable delivery manager.

18. The system of claim 16, wherein said means for defining the delivery policy comprises:

means for determining, from the user configuration, one or more delivery mechanisms supported by said intended recipient;

means for determining which of said one or more delivery mechanisms supported by said intended recipient are included in the one or more available delivery mechanisms to yield one or more possible delivery mechanisms; and

means for determining which of the one or more possible delivery mechanisms are supported by the pluggable delivery manager, as indicated in the configuration of the pluggable delivery manager, a result of which defines the delivery policy.

19. The system of claim 18, wherein said means for routing comprises means for dispatching the instant message to at least one delivery mechanism of the delivery policy, as indicated by the delivery policy.

20. The system of claim 16, wherein said means for routing comprises means for dispatching the instant message to at least one delivery mechanism of the delivery policy, as indicated by the delivery policy.

21. The system of claim 16, further comprising means for selecting the pluggable delivery manager from a plurality of delivery managers.

22. The system of claim 16, further comprising means for configuring said pluggable delivery manager.

23. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 22, wherein said means for configuring comprises means for selecting a configuration for said pluggable delivery manager from a set of one or more configurations, wherein the selecting uses content of the instant message to make the selection.

24. The system of claim 22, wherein said means for configuring comprises means for configuring said pluggable delivery manager at runtime.

25. The system of claim 16, wherein the intended recipient is indicated by the instant message.

26. The system of claim 16, wherein at least one available delivery mechanism of said one or more available delivery mechanisms is pluggable.

27. Canceled

28. Canceled

29. Canceled

30. Canceled

31. A system of routing instant messages, said system comprising:

a delivery policy defined, at runtime by a pluggable delivery manager, to be used to route an instant message to an intended recipient of the instant message, wherein the delivery policy is based upon a configuration of the pluggable delivery manager, a user configuration of the intended recipient, and one or more available delivery mechanisms; and

said pluggable delivery manager to route said instant message to the intended recipient using said delivery policy.

32. Canceled

33. At least one program storage device readable by a machine, tangibly embodying at least one program of instructions executable by the machine to perform a method of routing instant messages, said method comprising:

defining, at runtime by a pluggable delivery manager, a delivery policy to be used to route an instant message to an intended recipient of the instant message, wherein the delivery policy is based upon a configuration of the pluggable delivery manager, a user configuration of the intended recipient, and one or more available delivery mechanisms; and

routing said instant message to the intended recipient using said delivery policy.

34. The at least one program storage device of claim 33, wherein said defining of the delivery policy comprises:

defining a routing policy based on said user configuration and said one or more available delivery mechanisms, wherein said routing policy includes one or more possible delivery mechanisms; and

selecting from the routing policy at least one delivery mechanism to be included in the delivery policy, said selecting being based upon the configuration of the pluggable delivery manager.

35. The at least one program storage device of claim 33, wherein said defining of the delivery policy comprises:

determining, from the user configuration, one or more delivery mechanisms supported by said intended recipient;

determining which of said one or more delivery mechanisms supported by said intended recipient are included in the one or more available delivery mechanisms to yield one or more possible delivery mechanisms; and

determining which of the one or more possible delivery mechanisms are supported by the pluggable delivery manager, as indicated in the configuration of the pluggable delivery manager, a result of which defines the delivery policy.

36. The at least one program storage device of claim 35, wherein said routing comprises dispatching the instant message to at least one delivery mechanism of the delivery policy, as indicated by the delivery policy.

37. The at least one program storage device of claim 33, wherein said routing comprises dispatching the instant message to at least one delivery mechanism of the delivery policy, as indicated by the delivery policy.

38. The at least one program storage device of claim 33, wherein said method further comprises selecting the pluggable delivery manager from a plurality of delivery managers.

39. The at least one program storage device of claim 33, wherein said method further comprises configuring said pluggable delivery manager.

40. The at least one program storage device of claim 39, wherein said configuring comprises selecting a configuration for said pluggable delivery manager from a set of one or more configurations, wherein said selecting uses content of the instant message to make the selection.

41. The at least one program storage device of claim 39, wherein said configuring comprises configuring said pluggable delivery manager at runtime.

42. The at least one program storage device of claim 33, wherein the intended recipient is indicated by the instant message.

43. The at least one program storage device of claim 33, wherein at least one available delivery mechanism of said one or more available delivery mechanisms is pluggable.

44. Canceled

45. Canceled

46. Canceled

47. Canceled

48. The method of claim 1, wherein the pluggable delivery manager is dynamically added at runtime.

49. The system of claim 1, wherein the pluggable delivery manager is dynamically added at runtime.

50. The system of claim 31, wherein the pluggable delivery manager is dynamically added at runtime.

51. The at least one program storage device of claim 33, wherein the pluggable delivery manager is dynamically added at runtime.

Evidence Appendix

http://www.webopedia.com/TERM/r/runtime.html and http://whatis.techtarget .com/ definition/0,289893,sid9_gci212933,00.html, enclosed for the Examiner's convenience.

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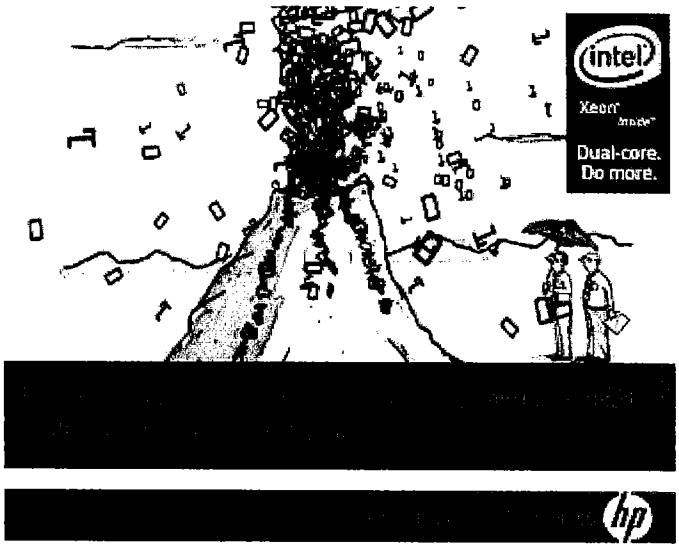
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runtime

Last modified: Tuesday, March 12, 2002

Occurring while a program is executing. For example, a runtime error is an error that occurs during program execution and a runtime library is a library of routines that are bound to the program during execution. In contrast, compile-time refers to events that occur while a program is being compiled.



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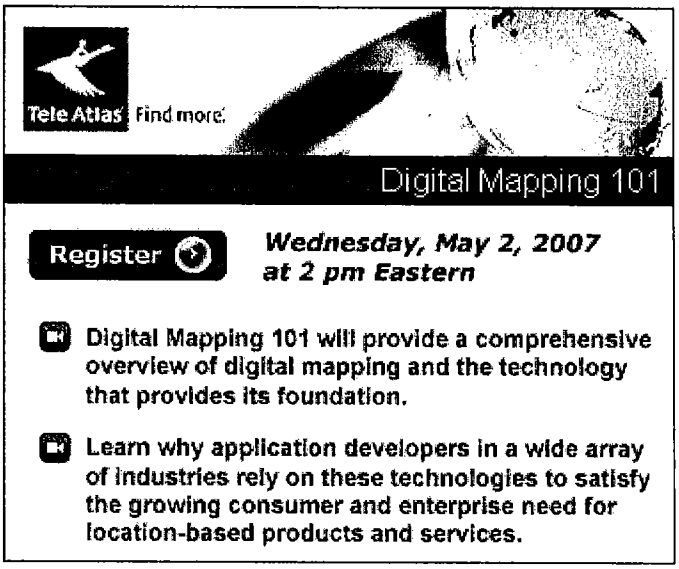
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runtime

DEFINITION - Runtime is when a program is running (or being executable). That is, when you start a program running in a computer, it is runtime for that program. In some programming languages, certain reusable programs or "routines" are built and packaged as a "runtime library." These routines can be linked to and used by any program when it is running.

Programmers sometimes distinguish between what gets embedded in a program when it is compiler and what gets embedded or used at runtime. The former is sometimes called "compile time."

For a number of years, technical writers resisted "runtime" as a term, insisting that something like "when a program is run" would obviate the need for a special term. Gradually, the term crept into general usage.

LAST UPDATED: 15 Feb 2007

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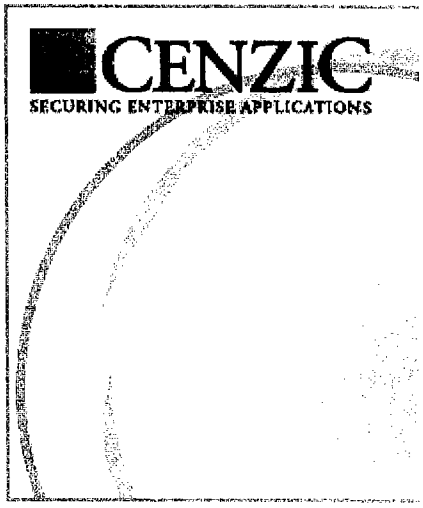
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